GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:936
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2000
FOREIGN POLICY ON HIJACKING OF IA IC - 814 PLANE
C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF;MADHAVRAO SCINDIA;SRIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of circumstances under which Government had to send the External Affairs Minister duly accompanied by the released militants in the same aircraft to Kandahar during hijacking settlement drama of IA Aircraft with its justification thereof;

(b) the decision to strike hazardous deal of exchange of the most dangerous prisoners for hostages in a foreign land (Afghanistan) in bewilderment;

(c) whether the Indian Government received any offer from the military from the military regime of Pakistan to resume bilateral talks between both the countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to review its foreign policy of not having talks with the present Pakistan`s Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and (g) the steps taken by the Government to deal with the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI JASWANT SINGH)
(a)-(b) The Minister for External Affairs decided to go to Kandahar so as to ensure that the termination of the hijacking, the smooth release and safe return of passengers and crew took place without any last minute hitch, also that should need arise, prompt decisions could be taken on the spot. The Minister`s presence in Kandahar and on board the aircraft on which the passengers returned home, provided solace to all the released passengers who had been held hostage for over a week. His travel on the same aircraft as the three terrorists was solely on account of logistical compulsions brought about by the limited infrastructure facilities at Kandahar airport, and its incapacity to handle any more aircraft simultaneously.
(c) No, Sir.
(d) Does not arise.

(e)-(g) Government are of the view that, in order to create a conducive environment for meaningful dialogue, Pakistan needs to halt its cross border terrorism against India and cease hostile propaganda.